

**More Police, Safer Streets,
Stronger Communities.**

**PAUL
RICHARDS**

**Police and Crime
Commissioner Election,
2 May 2024**

Labour & Co-operative

**Manifesto
for Policing in Sussex.**

 **Labour
and co-operative**





Preface

Paul Richards, *Labour & Co-operative candidate for Police and Crime Commissioner*

One thing I hear above all as I've been talking to residents and businesses in Brighton, Hove, Crawley, Hastings, Eastbourne, Henfield, Bexhill, Battle, Hassocks, Horsham, Chichester, Littlehampton, Bognor, Seaford, Lewes, Newhaven, Haywards Heath, St Leonards, Uckfield, and many other parts of Sussex, is this: people are angry.

They're angry about the potholes in the roads. They're angry about the day-long waits in A&E. They're angry about the swelling class sizes. They're angry about boarded up high streets and litter-strewn neighbourhoods. They're angry that to travel on Southern Rail is to spend more time on platforms than on trains. They're angry that everything seems broken and nothing works. And at the top of many people's list is the police. They're angry that they don't see the police on their streets and estates anymore. They're angry that criminals seem to get away with it. That our shops are looted and homes robbed with impunity. That even if you call them, the police often don't show up. That respect and decency and neighbourliness are so out of fashion. That the criminal justice system is fractured, with fewer police on the streets, court cases taking years, and victims being let down.

SOMETHING HAS GONE HORRIBLY WRONG OVER THE PAST 14 YEARS.

I'm standing to be your Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) because I believe it is time for change. I know things can be better than this. I bow to no-one in my support and admiration for our police family – I value the service and sacrifice of our police officers, special constables, PCSOs, and of course the civilian staff. I honour the memory of those we have lost, and recognise the bravery of those injured in the line of duty.

As part of the Labour & Co-operative team, I will bring new ideas and energy to the post. I will invest in neighbourhood police teams, so that you can see the police on your streets and in your communities. I will support victims of crime and witnesses to crime and rebuilt faith in the system. I will support the police and PCSOs as they do their difficult jobs, but I will have zero tolerance for the minority who shame the uniform. I will provide more diversionary activities for young people, to provide some structured activities, role models, and mental and physical fitness, like the boxing club I recently visited.

Most of all, I will represent the diverse and varied communities of Sussex to the police, and not the other way round. The Police and Crime Commissioner is the voice of the people within the police system, not its propagandist. The PCC should be visible, accountable, and full-time.

After so many years of decline, this is no time for 'more of the same'. This is no time for stasis and consolidation. People are angry. People deserve change. On 2 May, we can vote for change in Sussex, and send Sunak a signal that enough is enough.

Paul Richards,

*Labour & Co-operative candidate
for Police and Crime Commissioner.*

 **Labour**
and co-operative



Introduction – POLICING IN CRISIS

British policing is special and unique. Our system is rooted in the idea that the police are ‘citizens in uniform’, based on local constabularies, and we, as citizens, consent to being policed. Our police are not a branch of central government, nor routinely armed, nor part of a paramilitary force. These principles, laid down by the Conservative politician Robert Peel, are robust and have served us well.

But something has gone since the Conservatives came to office 14 years ago. Public trust in the police is crumbling. The YouGov monthly tracker shows that people believing the ‘police are doing a good job’ has declined from 77% in December 2019 to 50% in January 2024. Those who think the ‘police are doing a bad job’ have increased from 17% to 40% over the same period.

“PUBLIC TRUST IN THE POLICE IS HANGING BY A THREAD”

- **Andy Cooke**, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary

Talk to retailers facing an epidemic of looting, or anyone waking up this morning to find their homes ransacked, or women reporting sexual assault, and they will tell you the same thing: often the police don't show up, and if they do, nothing much happens

Far more insidious than the high-profile, stomach-churning scandals that have hit the police is the steady failure of the police in Sussex to prevent, detect, and solve crimes.

TODAY, NINE IN TEN CRIMES GO UNSOLVED.

In 2022, there were 146,547 crimes recorded by Sussex police. In 2023 this rose to 158,409, an overall increase of 8.1%. There has been a 54.4% increase in shoplifting from 2022 to 2023. Burglary is up in Sussex by 686 cases, an increase of 14.5%. Robberies rose by 232, an increase of 26%. Violent crime is up. Crimes involving a weapon have increased 43.9%.

CRIME IN SUSSEX IS GOING UP. CRIMINALS ARE GETTING AWAY WITH IT.

The police can only work within a landscape drawn by others. The Tories' and Lib Dems' removal of 20,000 police from England and Wales stands as one of the most stupid public policies since the Poll Tax. The effort to rectify this folly has been too little, too late. Fresh-faced recruits are replacing the experienced, officers and civilian experts who the Tories scrapped. Gavin Stephens, the chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council, reports that the equivalent of 6,000 of the 20,000 new officers were doing roles usually or better performed by police staff, and thus not on the streets. Our police are a weaker force than when the Tories took charge, and criminals have been emboldened.

People in Sussex know that the Tories' boasts about recruiting more police are a complete sham. They are merely replacing the numbers they already sacked, after years with too few cops on the beat. No-one is fooled by the Tory smoke-and-mirrors.



Labour will rebuild trust in Sussex Police

Labour's national crime 'mission' talks rightly about the urgent need to 'rebuild public confidence in policing and the criminal justice system.'

If elected as Police and Crime Commissioner, Paul Richards will set a goal of improving levels of trust in the police over the four-year term. For policing to be effective, there must be public confidence and trust. Without it, the criminals will win.

A RETURN TO BOBBIES ON THE BEAT



Labour will invest in more police on the streets and estates across Sussex. We will restore neighbourhood policing, with more ‘bobbies on the beat’. This means stable local teams, emmeshed in their communities, engaged in regular foot patrols on our estates, town centres, and public spaces. This is the one thing which does more than anything to reassure the public and prevent crime.

The College of Policing guidance states that ‘it is important that you have a targeted visible presence in communities. Targeted foot patrol, when implemented in combination with community engagement and problem-solving, can reduce crime and antisocial behaviour, reassure the public and improve their perceptions of the police. Random patrols and only responding to calls are unlikely to have the same effect’.

This was the guiding principle behind Labour’s reforms to policing led by David Blunkett and Hazel Blears during Labour’s previous period in office, and largely abandoned by the Tories. For example, the number of PCSOs was halved from 16,918 in 2010 to 8,750 in 2022. It is hard to mount visible foot patrols with invisible police.

Labour’s Paul Richards will recruit 400 more police across Sussex, and within the new plan for policing will deploy more officers, PCSOs, and special constables, into neighbourhood police teams. Local. Visible. On foot. On your side. That’s the Labour promise.

TACKLING THE EPIDEMIC OF SHOPLIFTING



Paul Richards makes the case on TV

Shoplifting is out of control across Sussex. From Hastings to Littlehampton, from Brighton to Crawley, retailers face an epidemic of looting from their shops. Businesses suffer, and shopworkers face abuse and assault on a weekly basis. Across the first six months of the year alone, for instance, the Co-op reported 175,000 recorded incidents, representing around 1,000 incidents a day and an increase of 35% from 2022..

Behind this epidemic is organised crime. Gangs recruit addicted people to rob shops, often with a shopping list of items. The goods are up for sale within hours, in local pubs, car boot sales, and round the back of restaurants. Criminals walk away with whole trays of cheese, meat, alcohol, and pharmaceuticals. Customers are left facing empty shelves and rising prices. Most of the time, the police do not turn up if called.

Labour will tackle looting from shops. We will introduce a new specific offence of assaulting a shop worker to send a signal that this crime must be tackled and punished. We will invest in two-way radios and CCTV. We will put police resources into tackling the organised crime gangs behind looting. We will tackle the addiction issues that fuel the criminality, working with the NHS, charities, and social services.

Labour will end a rule brought in by the Conservatives which means that shop thefts under £200 are not investigated. As your Police and Crime Commissioner, Paul Richards will insist that Sussex police attend reports of serious retail crime and support shop staff. More than this, we must teach children that shoplifting is a serious crime and morally wrong. Paul Richards will ensure that a uniformed police officer visits every school in Sussex at least once a year to talk with pupils about the law and shoplifting. Together, we can turn the tide on shoplifting. But not with 'more of the same'. On shoplifting, it is time for change.

TAKING KNIVES OFF THE STREET



We must tackle knife crime

We need to take back our streets from a rising epidemic of knife crime. In 2022, 282 people were fatally stabbed. The steepest increases in knife crime are in our towns and suburbs, so this is no longer a problem confined to our cities.

Too often nothing is done when there are signs that a young person is getting into trouble, being groomed by gangs, or lost into a dangerous online world. No young person in Sussex should ever carry a knife, nor feel the need to.

Too often when teenagers are caught with knives nothing happens. No support to stop a spiral into even more devastating crime. Too often when teenagers say they don't feel safe, or they are struggling themselves with trauma or abuse, no one listens, no help is provided.

The Tories have said they'll act 16 times in the last decade to stop the selling of dangerous knives – yet it is still easier to buy a lethal zombie-style knife online than it is to buy a kitchen knife on the high street.

Labour we will put in place swift, firm action and stronger enforcement. There must be tough consequences for carrying a knife. We need to tackle the causes of knife crime early and systematically – preventing young people being drawn into knife crime, targeting those most at risk of getting involved in knife crime and building a package of support to stop them ever picking up a knife.

Labour will bring in new and stronger laws to crack down on dangerous knife sales that the government promised and failed to ban so many times, and on the gangs who wield the knives.

As Police and Crime Commissioner, Paul Richards will convene a Sussex Knife Crime summit, including the police, councils, voluntary groups, campaigners, and campaigning news outlets such as the Brighton Argus.



Bleed control kits save lives

Paul Richards will appoint a Knife Crime Czar to co-ordinate efforts to tackle knife crime, including working to disrupt gangs, talking to schools, cracking down on retailers selling knives to young people, and educating parents.

Labour will support a new generation of 'bleed cabinets' across Sussex hotspots which provide the means to save the lives of stab victims, and we will train people how to use them. Bleed cabinets should be as ubiquitous and salient as defibrillators.

TACKLING RURAL CRIME



Paul Richards with campaigners in Ticehurst

The rural communities in Sussex are facing a crimewave, and the police seem powerless. Theft of agricultural machinery and vehicles is rife. GPS systems are targeted by criminal gangs because they are valuable and portable. Farm land is blighted by trespassers, fly-tipping, and environmental crime. Farm animals are under threat by dangerous and out-of-control dogs.

Sussex police are stretched too thin to protect rural communities, meaning response times are too slow. The Sussex rural crime team comprises one inspector, two sergeants, twelve constables and six PCSOs, to cover the whole of Sussex, from Chichester to Rye. This is plainly inadequate.

Labour will open four new rural police bases in East and West Sussex, with more officers dedicated to tackling rural crime. We will work with the National Farmers' Union (NFU) and Crimestoppers on campaigns to tackle animal theft, burglary, and other rural crimes. We will support stronger penalties for fly-tippers and organised crime gangs stealing GPS and other equipment to order.

ENDING ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

People's lives in Sussex are blighted by antisocial behaviour. Neighbours-from-hell. Out of control dogs. Graffiti and vandalism. Gangs hanging around the streets. Evidence of drug-taking everywhere. And the police nowhere to be seen.

There is a sense that our public spaces have been handed over to people who do not follow the rules and reject social norms of decency and civility. The withdrawal of 20,000 police officers when the Tories were elected has exacerbated this problem. Neighbourhood policing is one strong answer to antisocial behaviour. Local, visible police teams can deter antisocial behaviour, reassure residents, and be more aware of incidents of vandalism, graffiti, noise, and drugs dealing.

As Police and Crime Commissioner, Paul Richards will prioritise tackling antisocial behaviour, working with local authorities, residents' groups, Neighbourhood Watch, and voluntary groups. The police must use the full range of their powers, including Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs), Dispersal Orders, Community Protection Notices (CPNs), and powers to close premises. Labour will encourage Neighbourhood Watch schemes across the county alongside new community panels to direct the spending of proceeds of crime funds.

We will spend resources on programmes and encourage initiatives which engage young people from 12-18 years old in meaningful, diversionary activities. This might be summer schools and after-school activities, or activities such as boxing clubs, sailing clubs, sports, environmental schemes, police cadets, Woodcraft Folk or whatever young people choose themselves. We must end the situation whereby young people are hanging around the seafronts, streets, and shopping centres with nothing to do and nowhere to go, preyed upon by county lines gangs, and prone to antisocial behaviour.

Labour will establish a new Sussex-wide 'Taking A Stand' award programme to recognise local community heroes who stand up to antisocial behaviour in a constructive and lawful way, inspiring others, and working with their local community.

HAVE YOUR SAY ON HOW YOUR CASH IS SPENT: PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING



Paul will listen to local people

Participatory budgeting enables people and communities to have a real say in the decision-making process. Participatory budgeting provides citizens with the opportunity to decide democratically how to spend part of the police budget.

The objective of participatory budgeting is to ensure those who have been traditionally left out of decision-making processes have their opportunity to be heard, such as low-income citizens and young people.

Participatory budgeting has been implemented by public institutions around the world as a way of empowering communities. In 2013, the landmark Stevens Report on policing recommended *‘that police forces consider establishing participatory budgeting units in order to ensure greater involvement of local communities in allocating local policing resources’*.

Labour’s Paul Richards will introduce participatory budgeting into Sussex police, to engage all our local communities across the county, and to ensure the public’s voice is heard loud and clear.

Within a year of being elected, Paul Richards will establish a new system, with local sessions across Sussex involving local people. We will convene groups of citizens in Hastings, Worthing, Crawley, Brighton, Lewes and elsewhere to determine how and where their money should be spent.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS



Our prisons are overflowing. The sense is that there are plenty of people in prison who shouldn't be there, and plenty of people who should be. Recidivism – or persistent reincarceration through reoffending – blights our criminal justice system. In 2023, the proven reoffending rate from custodial sentences of less than 12 months was 54.4%, demonstrating a clear cycle of reoffending and conviction.

The UK's prison population has been growing rapidly since 1990, with the population doubling in England and Wales. This brings the total number of incarcerated people up to 89,520 by June 2022. Lewes Prison is filled with criminals learning how to be better criminals. One solution is Restorative Justice.

Restorative justice takes a victim-focused approach to justice, with the objective of providing victims of crime with closure and resolution. For offenders, they will need to admit their crimes, gain an understanding of the suffering they have caused to the victim, and work towards rehabilitation. Research from the Restorative Justice Council indicates that 85% of victims were satisfied with the restorative justice process, with it leading to a reduction of 27% in reoffending. This is a great way for justice to be done, and be seen to be done.



Community Payback makes a real difference

Another scheme is community payback. Community Payback is where offenders work on projects to pay back the community for their crimes, for example by removing graffiti, clearing wasteland, improving and decorating a public place or building, like a community centre. Communities should have a greater say in determining how community payback schemes are delivered and what they focus on.

Community involvement in decision-making would have numerous positive effects, including increasing trust in non-penal sentencing, aligning community payback to local priorities and having offenders engage with their locality. Community involvement in decision-making can be delivered by the establishment of community panels, which would identify, assess, and decide on projects of merit for community payback.

In Sussex, Paul Richards will enhance the role of restorative justice, making it available in all suitable cases across the county. And we will use community payback schemes to make criminals clean up rubbish and graffiti throughout Sussex.

Labour will appoint a new Victims' Champion in Sussex, with a real platform to support victims of crime. We will establish a new Sussex-wide Victims' Panel, working with the courts, prisons, probation, and police, to allow victims to guide policy and be heard.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Domestic and sexual abuse in Sussex are some of the most harmful crimes, which can lead to serious injury, long-term illness or death. With a crime that predominantly affects women and girls, achieving a safer society for them is of paramount importance – so that all can lead lives free from fear and abuse.

There has been a significant increase in the reporting of sexual offences, with an estimated 5.9 million victims aged 16 to 74 years experiencing sexual assault since the age of 16. Meaning approximately 14 in 100 adults have been affected.

Especially along the beaches and seafronts, women and girls face verbal and physical abuse and violence. Brighton beach is often a hostile environment for women, with abusive comments and unwanted attention from men.

Tackling domestic abuse towards women are a priority for Labour. In Sussex, Paul Richards will develop a Domestic Abuse Workplace Champions scheme, which aims to raise awareness of domestic abuse in the workplace so they can recognise victims and intervene to help them.

We will introduce a new Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) Strategy, which will reduce incidents, change attitudes, improve prevention and rehabilitate offenders. Labour will invest in Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs). ISVAs provide support throughout the criminal justice process, assisting with victim wellbeing, counselling and court proceedings as an advocate on behalf of the victim.

There can be zero tolerance for hateful, misogynist attitudes within the police family. Eradicating these attitudes starts with the recruitment and assessment of new police officers and PCSOs, and Labour will insist on new robust methods to weed out unsuitable recruits before they get anywhere near the public. The dash to recruit new officers must never be at the expense of their suitability to protect the citizenry.

A POLICE SERVICE FOR EVERYONE IN SUSSEX



Sussex Police is a vital public service, funded by the taxpayers, and answerable to the people. Paul Richards will invest in support for the victims of hate crimes, and give real solidarity and support to voluntary groups working to tackle antisemitism, racism, homophobia, transphobia, and other manifestations of hatred. The police must treat hate crimes, intimidation in our town centres, and racist chants as serious crimes, which must be dealt with seriously.

Labour will ensure that people who are neurodivergent or have mental health conditions get the appropriate treatment and support, and are not treated as criminals when they need help and understanding. Labour will ensure mental health and neurodiversity form part of the police training programmes, and ongoing professional support for police officers, PCSOs, and others dealing with the public.

The police as 'citizens in uniform' must reflect the diverse communities of Sussex within the workforce, with recruitment of new officers from a range of backgrounds. If you're up to the job, there should be no barriers to you stepping up to serve.

SNAPSHOT: PAUL RICHARDS ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL ACROSS SUSSEX



Top left to Bottom Right: Paul with Helena Dollimore, Paul with Dave Rowntree, Paul with Tom Rutland, Paul talking to residents, Paul with Yvette Cooper MP, Paul in Bognor with Baroness Angela Smith and campaigners.



Top Left to Bottom Right: Paul in Bexhill with campaigners, Paul in Crawley with Cllr Michael Jones and Cllr Yasmin Khan, Paul with Abena Oppong-Asare MP, Paul supporting USDAW campaign for shop workers, Paul in Eastbourne, Paul with Co-operative Party banner.

THE LABOUR & CO-OPERATIVE DIFFERENCE



Paul Richards is proud to be the Labour & Co-operative candidate in this election. That means an entirely different approach, different values, and different priorities from the Conservatives.

Paul's politics is anchored in the values of democracy, equality, social justice, and individual liberty. He first sought the nomination to stand as Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner in 2012, and stood in the elections last time.

Paul Richards will do things differently. For example, there will be more focus on hate crimes, modern slavery, online fraud, county lines, cuckooing, and other crimes which destroy lives and drive communities apart.

Paul Richards will be a full-time, visible, and accountable Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).

Paul Richards will use the procurement power of Sussex police to support local Co-ops and small businesses and start-ups in the community. He will investigate ways to reduce the carbon footprint of Sussex police, with more patrols on foot and bicycle, more electric vehicles, and investment in insulation and energy-saving technology across the police estate.

Labour will insist that all vacant land owned by the constabulary be used for the community, from creating community bee-friendly gardens, allotments to grow food, or eco-friendly affordable housing (including for police officers). We believe we can 'green' the thin blue line.

In this election it is a straight choice between Labour and Tories. Last time, Labour came second across Sussex, but won in Brighton and Hove. This time, the only way to get rid of the Conservatives is to vote Labour. Even if you normally vote for another party, in this election Labour is asking you to 'loan' your vote to us to send Sunak a signal.

More police.

Safer Streets.

Stronger Communities.

That's the Labour & Co-operative difference.

Labour's Paul Richards will be a hard-working and energetic Police and Crime Commissioner, offering a fresh start after 14 years of the Tories.

It is time for change.

In a spirit of hope and optimism we offer up this manifesto for the consideration of the people of Sussex.



Paul Richards

**The strong choice for Sussex
Police and Crime Commissioner**

Paul Richards is a father-of-two who lives with his wife in Eastbourne. He joined the Labour Party in the 1980s and the Co-operative Party in the 1990s, and has campaigned for social justice and equality for over 40 years.

He worked for the Police Minister who introduced neighbourhood policing under Labour, and served as a special adviser on community cohesion and counter-extremism to a Labour Secretary of State. He also served as special adviser at the Department of Health. Paul stood for parliament in Lewes in the 2001 general election, and for Billericay in 1997. He regularly appears on radio and television as a political pundit and commentator.

Paul is author of four books, and has worked across the world including Pakistan, Tanzania, Malaysia, Tunisia, Kenya, Ghana, across most of Europe, and Iraq.

Paul loves walking in the South Downs, swimming at our seaside, and has recently lost ten stones in weight through a programme of diet and exercise. He loves live music in our wonderful Sussex music venues and loves Sixties music, style, and the 'mod' aesthetic. Paul is a member of Ronnie Scott's. He holds an MA from Birkbeck University of London in Victorian Studies.